

## **Dissertation Prospectus**

This dissertation will examine why so few Asian American faculty members enter academic administrative positions. Academic administrative positions include department chair, dean, vice president, and president positions. I will study this problem by interrogating the relevance of three theories that current empirical work suggests could explain their under-representation. The theories are Lord and colleagues' implicit leadership theory (Lord, 1977; Lord & Alliger, 1985; Lord & Emrich, 2001), Bentley et al.'s (2015) political acculturation strategies model, and Ajzen's (1992) theory of planned behavior. These theories pertain to individuals' leadership perceptions, expatriates' organizational political behavior strategies, and individuals' planned behavior respectively. Connections between the theories will also be considered in attempting to provide a more holistic picture of why few Asian Americans enter academic leadership roles.

Two main reasons support the need to study this topic in the proposed manner. First, going back to the late 1980s, data show a persistent gap between Asian Americans' tenured faculty representation and their academic administrative representation (e.g. ACE, 2013b; Brown, 1988; Committee of 100 [C-100], 2005; Hsia, 1988; Hu, 2008; Matsuura, 1996; Shintaku, 1996). Currently, AAPIs hold nine percent of tenured faculty positions, yet they only hold three percent of central senior academic officer positions, two percent of academic deanships, less than one percent of CAO/provost positions, and one percent of presidencies (ACE, 2013a). In comparison, African Americans hold four percent of tenured faculty positions but six percent of central senior academic officer positions, five percent of college deanships, four percent of provost positions, and six percent of presidencies. Hispanics hold three percent of tenured faculty positions and less than one percent of central senior academic officer positions, college deanships, and provost positions; Hispanics' representation in the presidency is in proportion with their tenured faculty representation at three percent (ACE, 2013a). The persistence of Asian Americans' under-representation, even after the problem was first identified nearly three decades ago, warrants additional study. Perhaps the reason for the persistent gap can be partially found in the second reason for the present study. This second reason is that the few studies on the dearth of Asian Americans in academic administration have been largely exploratory, and while these studies provide a valuable set of ideas on what is preventing participation, interrogating these ideas within existing theories will extend their explanatory power. This work will be done in the present study by assessing the presence, interconnections, and generalizability of the previously identified factors in the context of the theories stated above.

This study will attempt to contribute to the literature in these particular ways by utilizing two faculty surveys to answer seven research questions derived from the theories in combination with the existing empirical work. The first survey is the 2013-2014 UCLA Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey and the second survey is the 2011-2012 Harvard Graduate School of Education's Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Faculty Satisfaction Survey. The HERI Faculty Survey will be used as the primary data source in answering the questions; the COACHE survey will be used as an extra layer of evidence to support or question the findings from HERI data. I will apply *t* tests, chi-squared tests, and logistic regressions to the data sources to answer the research questions. Finally, consideration will be given to the ways in which the findings associated with the individual theories connect. As previously mentioned, this will provide more comprehensive conclusions than could be achieved by examining the three theories individually.

I hope the findings from this study will benefit educational researchers, leadership training facilitators, current academic administrators, and current Asian American faculty members. Educational researchers will benefit from theory-based findings on Asian Americans, a group for whom there is a dearth of research, particularly theory driven research. These findings will also assist higher education leadership development professionals who would benefit from deeper explanations on how the forces inhibiting participation operate and interact. Current academic administrators who are interested in maintaining a robust pool of potential academic leaders at their institutions can use these findings to further their abilities to recruit and train future chairs, deans, and vice presidents. Finally, Asian American faculty members interested in administrative roles will benefit from understanding the unique difficulties they could encounter in seeking to enter these competitive positions.

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